

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The National Estuary Program (NEP) contains seventeen estuary programs, including the Albemarle-Pamlico (A/P) Estuarine System. The NEP helps support work in these individual estuaries for five years by providing financial and technical support for management and research that is carried out locally. The goal of providing five years of support is to enhance the local capacity to protect, manage and restore the estuary. At the end of the five year Study, a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) for the A/P estuary will be developed and new working relationships will be formed to carry the work forward.

The purpose of this project was to identify, present and evaluate programs embodying innovative and successful management strategies that address environmental systems. Special attention was given to finding examples of federal-state-local partnerships and programs that address natural resource problems from a watershed framework. Over seventy programs were screened. Nineteen programs were selected for more detailed reporting. Information about each program, including its mandate, organization, decision making body, staff, budget and public involvement, was presented. Based on the overview of seventy programs and the more detailed analysis of the nineteen programs, the report presents the following recommendations to the A/P Management Conference for consideration while developing and implementing the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine Study's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.

These recommendations grew out of the collective wisdom of numerous people in the organizations we contacted. The recommendations are intended to cover topics that are important to the success of implementing the Plan, whether this work is done by an existing or new organization. We refer to this organization variously as the Management Conference's "successor" or "oversight board," since we do not know what it will be called. The recommendations are organized by category: mandate, organization, and public involvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Mandate

Role of the CCMP implementation group/organization/agency: The A/P Management Conference should decide who will be responsible for CCMP implementation and define that "successor's" mandate and function.

Linking or networking existing programs: The A/P Management Conference should recommend that their successor's mandate be broad so that all issues regarding water quality and quantity can be addressed when necessary.

Watershed boundaries for the management framework: The A/P Management Conference should support the State's use of the watershed approach to permitting and